



Rhode Island Department of Revenue

Division of Taxation

Information about Division's "Seminar for Tax Preparers"

The following information is for tax preparers who plan to attend the Division's online "Seminar for Tax Preparers" on Wednesday, December 9, 2020, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Last year, we held an in-person seminar. This year, however, we will hold the seminar online – as a precaution amid the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This year's virtual seminar will be held on Wednesday, December 9, 2020, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

The seminar is intended only for tax preparers and is focused on the coming filing season.

In advance of the seminar, preparers have the opportunity to send us their questions about the coming filing season using the following email address: Tax.Outreach@tax.ri.gov. (Please do not include any client-specific information.) We will answer as many of those questions as possible during the seminar.

Although this year's seminar will be online, we nonetheless will offer preparers our usual comprehensive presentation, with several speakers and an advance look at what's new for the tax-filing season.

Preparation

The Division will offer the seminar using the Zoom webinar platform. (Some of you may be familiar with using Zoom already; some of you may not.) Please keep the following points in mind:

- If possible, use a computer to connect to the meeting, because the presentation may be difficult to read on a smaller device.
- In advance of the seminar, please disable any pop-up blockers on your web browser, and please make sure that you are using the latest version of your web browser.
- Make sure that you have a good Internet connection. A hard-wired connection, if available, is better than Wi-Fi. In addition, please consider using a headset or earphones so that you can hear better.
- Close other applications running on your computer for the duration of the seminar.
- If you have previously downloaded Zoom, please ensure there are no software updates needed (i.e., you are using the latest version).

Registration

You will soon receive an email from us that contains a link to use in order to register in advance for the seminar.

Once you have registered, you will receive another email. It will confirm your registration and include a link to use to join the seminar on Wednesday morning, December 9. Please save that email, so that it is readily available to you on the morning of the seminar.

- ✓ The link in that email is specific to you. For security reasons, please use that link to access the seminar and please do not share that link with others. Due to coronavirus restrictions, we may be unable to accept new registrations or provide technical assistance during the seminar. Therefore, keeping that email safe and readily available is your best bet to gain access on the day of the seminar.

On the day of the seminar, please open that email that you have set aside. When you click on that link to join the seminar, you may be asked to save a Zoom file. Go ahead and save it. Then follow the on-screen instructions to get into the seminar via Zoom. (If you are asked for your name and email address, please enter the name and email address that you used when you registered.) For security reasons, you may be held in an online “waiting room” or online “lobby” until you can be admitted. For that reason, please consider clicking on the link in that email up to 30 minutes before the 9:00 a.m. start of the seminar.

Put another way, it is best not to wait until 9:00 a.m. on the day of the seminar to click on the link. Please click on the link up to 30 minutes in advance of the seminar’s 9:00 a.m. start time. (If we use an online “waiting room” or online “lobby” and you are not immediately admitted to the seminar, please be patient; we will be admitting attendees as fast as we are able.)

Questions and polling

When the seminar begins, you will be a seminar attendee, in view-only and listen-only mode. For security reasons, only the Division’s speakers will be able to speak at the seminar.

If you have questions, please email them in advance to: Tax.Outreach@tax.ri.gov. We also plan to give tax preparers the opportunity to raise questions during the seminar itself. (If so, please do not include any client-specific information in your question.) But your best bet is to send your questions to us ahead of time, to: Tax.Outreach@tax.ri.gov.

We plan to offer one or more polling questions during the seminar. If polling questions are offered, please take part in them. When a polling question pops up on your screen, read the responses and choose an answer. Once you have chosen an answer, use your computer mouse to move the cursor to the button next to your answer, click on your mouse to select your answer, then submit your answer.

Continuing education

We plan to provide a certificate of completion to everyone who attends our online seminar from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on December 9, 2020, and who takes part in the polling questions. It is therefore important to disable any pop-up blockers on your web browser. You will qualify for the

certificate if you attend the entire seminar from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on December 9 and take part in all of the polling questions at that time.

Our position regarding certificates of completion has not changed: For this seminar, we expect to offer a certificate showing three hours (3.0) of continuing education. However, whether the organization that oversees your professional license or designation will accept those hours is between you and that organization. We hope to send your certificate, via postal mail or email, by the end of December 2020.

(It is possible that, at some point after the seminar is completed, an archived version of the seminar may be made available for later viewing. This has yet to be determined. If we do offer an archived version, we will email you to let you know. A certificate of completion will be available only for taking part in the “live” online seminar on December 9, not for viewing any archived version.)

Other points

- As noted above, the seminar is for tax preparers only, and is geared toward the upcoming filing season. Payroll-service providers, employers, and health insurers who have questions about Rhode Island’s health insurance mandate should use the following email address: Tax.IndMandate@tax.ri.gov.
- Those who seek an update on refund status should use the following link: <https://www.ri.gov/taxation/refund/>.
- To contact the Division’s Personal Income Tax section directly: Tax.Assist@tax.ri.gov.
- For details about the two new grant programs recently launched to aid businesses amid the pandemic: <http://www.tax.ri.gov/RIGrants/index.php>. If you still have questions related to the grant programs, please email: Tax.Excise@tax.ri.gov, or call (401) 574-8484.

Slides

During the seminar, our speakers will frequently refer to slides that contain the basics of the seminar. We plan to post a copy of those slides within one or two business days after the seminar is over. To view the slides once they become available, please use the following link and scroll down to “Practitioners’ Corner”: <http://www.tax.ri.gov/onlineservices/>.

Technical matters

As noted above, once you register for the seminar, you will receive another email that includes a link to gain access to the seminar itself. That email also should include phone numbers you may use to access the seminar via phone in case you be unable to access the seminar online via computer or other such device.

Should you have any technical issues connecting to the seminar, please see the Zoom Help Center, which has tutorials and other helpful information: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>.

Thank you for your interest in the seminar.

12/04/2020